Municipal District of Bonnyville No. 87

General Municipal Plan 1985

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MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BONNYVILLE NO. 87
GENERAL MUNICIPAL PLAN
1985

THE COUNCIL OF THE M.D. OF BONNYVILLE ADOPTED THIS PLAN BY BYLAW NO. 920 ON THE 9TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1985.

AMENDMENTS:

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PART ONE – INTRODUCTION

1. PURPOSE

The Municipal District of Bonnyville No. 87 (M.D.) has had a Land Use Bylaw in place since July, 1978. The Land Use Bylaw identifies the types of land use and development which are permitted in the M.D., and establishes minimum building and development standards. The M.D. also has various planning policies, adopted by resolution of Council, which assist the Council and the Municipal Planning Commission (M.P.C.) in making land use planning decisions.

During a review and update of the Land Use Bylaw in 1983, the Council expressed a desire to discuss the rationale for, and suitability of, existing planning policies and guidelines. The Council also identified a need to improve the public's awareness of the land use planning process and the role the M.D. plays in it. It was decided that the preparation of a General Municipal Plan (G.M.P. or Plan) would serve as a means of addressing both of these concerns.

The purposes of this Plan are as follows:

1. TO REVIEW EXISTING LAND USE PLANNING POLICIES AND GUIDELINES AND AMEND OR ADD TO THEM WHERE APPROPRIATE.

2. TO PRESENT THE POLICIES AND GUIDELINES IN A MANNER WHICH IS READILY UNDERSTOOD BY THE PUBLIC AND EASILY REFERENCED BY THE COUNCIL AND THE M.P.C.

3. TO FORMALIZE THE M.D.'S PLANNING POLICIES IN A STATUTORY DOCUMENT.

2. FORMAT

The Plan is comprised of goals, philosophy statements and policies, all of which are interrelated. The goals describe the overall role of planning in the M.D.: what it is meant to achieve, and the context within which this should occur. The philosophy statements reflect the Council's views and objectives on specific types of land use and development. The policies describe the manner in which these objectives will be achieved.

3. GOALS

The Plan goals are listed in order of importance.

1. TO MANAGE LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE M.D. ONLY TO THE EXTENT NECESSARY FOR THE GREATER PUBLIC GOOD.

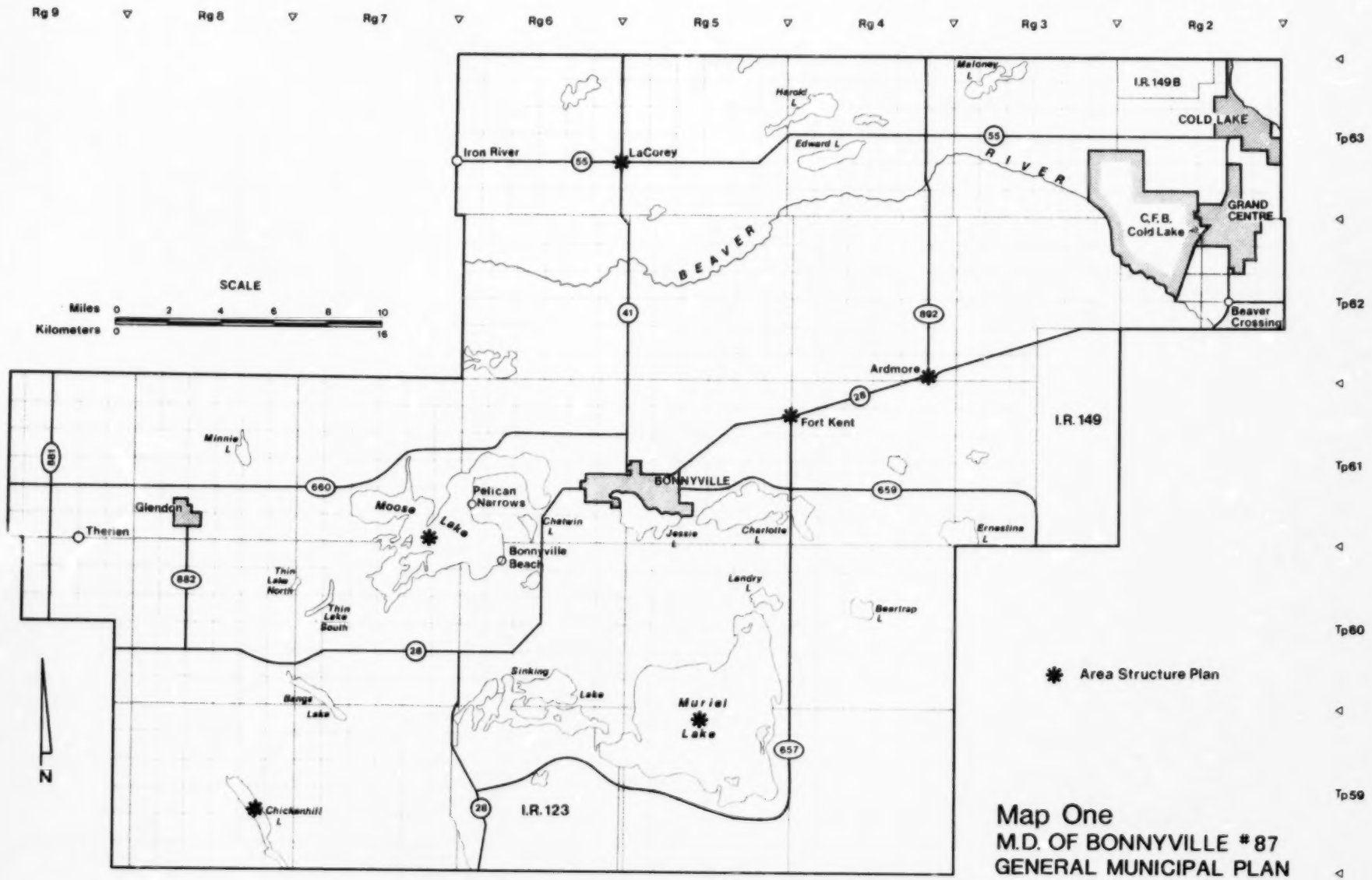
   The Council respects the value of free enterprise, and the right of landowners to determine the manner in which their land may be used. The Council also recognizes that the actions of an individual or group may sometimes negatively affect others in the community. The desire of the Council is to minimize regulation of land use and development, confining it to those situations where the needs and rights of the larger community require representation.

2. TO ENCOURAGE THE EXPANSION AND DIVERSIFICATION OF THE M.D.'S ECONOMIC BASE.

   The Council places great importance on the economy of the M.D. It will support the establishment and development of industrial and commercial activities which will benefit the M.D. through taxes and/or employment opportunities. The Council will discourage any proposed development which would place an undue burden on the rate payers of the M.D.

3. TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL CONFLICTS BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

   The Council recognizes that some types of land use and development are incompatible due to such factors as noise, odour or level of activity. Proposed developments will be evaluated in terms of their possible impact on existing land uses and developments, with first consideration being given to the existing uses and activities.



Map One
M.D. OF BONNYVILLE #87
GENERAL MUNICIPAL PLAN

PART TWO – PLAN POLICIES

1. AGRICULTURE

1.1 Background

The M.D. has traditionally been an agricultural community, although in recent years other activities, such as oil and gas extraction, have taken on an increasingly important role.

The total amount of improved and unimproved farmland in the M.D. decreased by 9.5% between 1971 and 1981, with a corresponding reduction in the number of farms of 8.6%. The average size of farms remained constant (239 ha, 590 acres), while the amount of improved farmland increased by 10.4%. Most farming operations are mixed, with beef cattle being the major type of livestock.[1]

The agricultural capability of the land generally ranges from Class 3 to 5 (Canada Land Inventory System), the most frequent limitation being climate.

1.2 Philosophy

The Council believes that most farmland, regardless of its agricultural capability, can be important to a farming operation either for crops or pasture. Although it does not believe that 80 acre splits would have a serious impact on the viability of agriculture in the M.D., the Council has decided that they would have a negative impact on the M.D. as a whole in the form of increased taxes. This is because the creation of 80 acre splits could potentially double the number of farm residences, and therefore the amount of road maintenance and other services required, without generating a complimentary increase in the tax base.

Intensive livestock operations (feedlots) are not generally compatible with urban development, or rural residential uses, due to their associated odours. In order to ensure the long-term viability of intensive livestock facilities, and to avoid potential land use conflicts, the Council believes that the location of intensive livestock facilities in relation to other uses and activities should be carefully considered.

1.3 Policies:

1. The quarter section shall be considered the minimum parcel size for extensive agriculture.

2. In order to minimize potential land use conflicts, new intensive livestock facilities shall only be located outside of the urban fringe (as defined in Section 5).

3. The M.D. shall request that the Regional Agricultural Engineer provide an *Engineering Site Assessment for Livestock Facilities* for any subdivision or development proposal involving an intensive livestock facility. This assessment shall be utilized by the M.D. when evaluating the proposal.

[1] *1971 Census of Agriculture by I.D., M.D. and County:* Alberta Department of Agriculture; *1981 Census of Agriculture by I.D., M.D. and County;* Alberta Department of Agriculture

2. COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL

2.1 Background

The M.D. has a 1985 population of 9808 people, 4645 of which are located at the Canadian Forces Base in Medley[1]. There are approximately 200 farmstead separations and 200 single country residential parcels in the M.D., with the highest concentration found in the central part of the municipality around the Town of Bonnyville. There is a constant demand for these types of country residential subdivisions, and more than half of the existing parcels are developed. There are numerous multi-lot lake subdivisions around Moose, Muriel and Chickenhill Lakes, most of which were created during the 1960's and 1970's. They contain a total of approximately 1000 lots, half of which are developed. There are also four small multi-lot rural subdivisions containing a total of 28 lots. These were created prior to the adoption of the M.D.'s first land use bylaw in 1978, and are all developed.

2.2 Philosophy

The Council believes that, if carefully planned, a variety of rural lifestyles can be accommodated in the M.D. without causing negative impacts on the existing rural community. It supports a moderate amount of multi-lot lake subdivisions because they provide an attractive resort-type setting for both cottages and homes. Similarly, the Council wishes to allow for the creation of multi-lot rural subdivisions because they can provide an alternative to urban living without the isolation of acreages. The Council also believes that all landowners should be entitled to the "first parcel out" of their quartersection for either a farmstead separation or a single country residential parcel.

2.3 Policies

1. The subdivision of one farmstead or country residential parcel from each unsubdivided quartersection, in addition to any fragmented parcels, shall be supported. The parcel size will generally be 0.4 to 4.0 ha with the following exceptions:

   a) In order to encompass existing development such as buildings, fences or shelterbelts, a farmstead parcel may exceed 4.0 ha.

   b) In order to minimize the unnecessary loss of good agricultural land, country residential parcels on better agricultural lands (Farmland Assessment Rating greater than 40%) may not generally exceed 1.2 ha.

   c) In order to maintain good site lines at intersections, country residential parcels at the intersection of M.D. roads may not generally be less than 1.2 ha.

   d) In order to encompass all of the area separated from the balance of a quartersection, a fragmented parcel may exceed 4.0 ha.

2. In order to minimize the unnecessary loss of good agricultural land, applicants shall be encouraged to locate single country residential parcels on the lowest capability agricultural land on the quartersection.

3. Multi-lot lake subdivisions may be supported where they are considered appropriate under the lake area structure plans (Moose, Muriel and Chickenhill) or the *M.D. of Bonnyville Lake Planning Framework* (Beartrap, Ernestina and Minnie)[2]. Any such development will be subject to appropriate zoning in the Land Use Bylaw and compliance with the policies of the applicable area structure plan or the *Lake Planning Framework*.

[1] *M.D. of Bonnyville Census, 1985*

4. Unless otherwise specified in an applicable lake area structure plan, multi-lot lake subdivisions proposed within 1.6 km (1 mile) of a lake shall comply with the following conditions:

   a) the clearing of vegetation of each residential lot shall be minimized in order to maintain aesthetics and visual buffers from neighbouring properties and the lake;

   b) the development shall, in the opinion of the Council, be compatible both with existing uses and the overall development capabilities of the lake environment and residential development shall not be permitted within 30 m (100 ft) of the shoreline;

   c) vegetation clearing for purposes of lake access shall be subject to a development permit;

   d) the developer shall provide public wells as required;

   e) the use of pit toilets for sewage disposal shall not be allowed;

   f) the developer shall clear and post all walkways to improve pedestrian access; and

   g) the developer shall construct boat launching facilities as required and to the satisfaction of the M.D.

5. Multi-lot lake or rural subdivisions may be supported on land which:

   a) has lower agricultural capability (Farmland Assessment Rating of 40% or less);

   b) has access to at least an all-weather loose surface road within 1.6 km (1 mile) and preferably a paved road within 8 km (5 miles) of the area;

   c) has an adequate supply of on-site potable water;

   d) has slope, soil drainage, and water table conditions suitable for on-site sewage disposal;

   e) has suitable area for a building site which can accommodate a dwelling with a permanent foundation; and

   f) has natural landscape features such as trees and rolling topography.

   Any such development shall be subject to appropriate zoning in the Land Use Bylaw.

6. The preparation of an outline plan or area structure plan may be required for any proposed multi-lot lake or rural subdivision containing 6 or more parcels.

[2] *The M.D. of Bonnyville Lake Planning Framework*, prepared by Alberta Municipal Affairs in 1984, addresses the types of uses which should occur at the various lakes in the municipality.

3. INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL

3.1 Background

There are approximately 80 industrial and commercial operations located in the M.D., with the heaviest concentrations in the areas surrounding the towns of Bonnyville, Cold Lake and Grand Centre, and along the highways and secondary roads. The types of development include farm services, construction, repairs, oilfield services, auto wreckers and salvage yards, airports and oil recovery. Many of these operations are located on unsubdivided quarter sections, with the remainder on smaller lots created for that use. The first industrial park in the M.D. is now being developed on Highway #55, west of the Town of Cold Lake (S.W. 21-63-2-4). Other major development includes the Suncor Oil Recovery Project at Fort Kent and Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake, west of Grand Centre.

3.2 Philosophy

The Council considers industrial/commercial development to be an important component of the M.D.'s economy due to the jobs created and the tax revenue generated. The Council therefore wishes to encourage this type of development, subject to adequate control of the location and nature of development so as to minimize any negative impacts.

3.3 Policies

1. Industrial/commercial development shall be supported subject to appropriate zoning in the Land Use Bylaw.

2. In order to ensure orderly and economic development, the M.D. may require the preparation of an outline plan or area structure plan for any proposed industrial park containing 6 or more parcels. An industrial park shall be defined as two or more lots, designed and approved for industrial/commercial uses.

3. Appropriate access shall be required for all proposed industrial/commercial development. Appropriate access shall mean paved roads if, in the opinion of the M.D., substantial traffic is likely to be generated.

4. The proponent of a rural industrial park shall be required to provide the following information concerning the proposal before Council may consider recommending subdivision approval:

    a) environmental suitability of site, with particular reference to soils, slopes, drainage, and availability of services

    b) size and number of parcels proposed

    c) phasing, if anticipated

    d) servicing requirements and provisions for meeting them

    e) costs associated with providing new or upgraded municipal services required by the development

4. HAMLETS

4.1 Background

There are several hamlets in the M.D., all varying in size and the services they provide. Fort Kent has a population of approximately 200 people, and is growing at a moderate but steady pace. Both Fort Kent and Ardmore (population approximately 300) are serviced with water and sewer. Ardmore has experienced very little growth in recent years. La Corey (population approximately 60) has been growing at a moderate rate. All three of these hamlets were studied in detail in 1979, resulting in the preparation and adoption of area structure plans which establish the manner in which they should be developed.

There are also three smaller hamlets (Beaver Crossing, Iron River and Therien). None of these hamlets have been growing, and Therien (which has sewer service in place) has in fact experienced a reduction in population.

4.2 Philosophy

The Council recognizes the valuable role the hamlets play as local service centres and meeting places for both residents and the surrounding farm community. In cooperation with the residents of the hamlets, the M.D. will continue to monitor activities occurring in the hamlets with a view to ensuring their continued long-term viability.

4.3 Policies

1. Hamlet area structure plans shall be reviewed and updated as the M.D. considers necessary.

2. Community participation in the preparation, review and updating of plans shall be encouraged.

5. URBAN FRINGE

5.1 Background

The term "urban fringe" refers to the lands which are adjacent to a developed urban area. In some cases this land may lie all or partly within the boundaries of the urban municipality. More often however, the urban fringe encompasses farmland which is still part of the adjacent rural municipality.

Land use conflicts can sometimes occur in this transition zone where urban and rural-type uses meet. An additional concern in this zone relates to the inevitable expansion of the urban centre onto these rural lands. Some types of land use and development, which are appropriate in a rural setting, may be difficult to integrate into an urban development pattern.

There are four urban municipalities within the boundaries of the M.D.: the towns of Bonnyville (population 5,223), Cold Lake (population 2,805) and Grand Centre (population 3,506), and the Village of Glendon (population 471)[1]. Activities which have occurred around these municipalities have, for the most part, involved the subdivision of single country residential parcels. Other activity has included the establishment of engineering and construction operations (west of Bonnyville) and an industrial park (west of Cold Lake).

5.2 Philosophy

The Council recognizes the need to coordinate planning for lands which are likely to be annexed to an urban municipality in the near future. The Council does not, however, believe that it is necessary to restrict the types of development which may occur in this area. It prefers instead to ensure that development occurs in a manner which can be integrated into urban development pattern, having regard for such matters as lot size and layout, and future service road requirements.

5.3 Policies

1. The urban fringe shall be considered to be the area within 3.2 km (2 miles) of a town or city having a population exceeding 5000 persons, 1.6 km (1 mile) of a town having a population of between 1000 and 4,999 persons, and 0.8 km (0.5 miles) of a village or summer village having a population of less than 1000 persons.

2. Adjacent urban municipalities shall be consulted on all subdivision or development proposals within the urban fringe.

3. The establishment of new intensive livestock facilities (feedlots) shall not be permitted in the urban fringe.

[1] Official Population List, 1985; Alberta Municipal Affairs.

6. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

6.1 Background

Most recreational activity in the M.D. centres on its lakes. The lakes, which include Beartrap, Chickenhill, Ernestina, Minnie, Moose, and Muriel, are used variously for fishing, camping, swimming, water-skiing and cottaging in the summer and ice fishing and cross country skiing in the winter. River valleys and upland areas which have not yet been cleared for agriculture are used for less intensive activities such as hunting, hiking and nature observation. Responsibility for the management of these resources is shared between the M.D., two summer villages (Bonnyville Beach and Pelican Narrows on Moose Lake), the Province, and the general public.

The M.D. has prepared and adopted lake area structure plans, with the assistance of the Province, for three of its lakes (Chickenhill, Moose and Muriel) to ensure that they are managed wisely. In order to supplement the existing recreational facilities in the area, including several M.D. parks (at Chickenhill, Cold, Ernestina, Moose and Muriel Lakes), the municipality has also undertaken the development of a major park at Muriel Lake.

6.2 Philosophy

The Council believes that the recreational resources of the M.D. are valuable both to local residents and to tourists from other areas. The Council wishes to ensure that the recreational potential of these resources is maximized while maintaining their environmental quality.

6.3 Policies

1. Lake area structure plans shall be reviewed and updated as the M.D. considers necessary.

2. *The M.D. of Bonnyville Lake Planning Framework*, which addresses the types of uses which should occur at the various lakes in the municipality, shall be used as a guide when evaluating subdivision and development proposals.

3. The M.D. shall continue to manage and maintain the M.D. parks and to consider the establishment of new parks where the need exists.

4. The public shall be kept informed of the guidelines and restrictions affecting river and lake use as established by the lake area structure plans, and by provincial legislation through Alberta Environment, Alberta Energy and Natural Resources, and Alberta Social Services and Community Health.

5. In cooperation with the various provincial departments, all regulations pertaining to river and lakeshore use and development shall be enforced.

7. TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES

7.1 Background

Transportation and utility routes in the M.D. include roads and highways, railways, gas and power lines and pipelines. Existing routes and facilities are constantly being upgraded and expanded and new ones constructed. The M.D. has direct responsibility for the construction and maintenance of M.D. roads, and maintenance of secondary roads. Most other transportation and utility routes are under provincial jurisdiction.

The increasing level of use which various gravelled and oiled M.D. roads are beginning to receive as a result of oil activity to the north in Improvement District No. 18 has led to a dramatic increase in maintenance requirements in recent years. The Province has assisted the M.D. by redesignating two secondary roads (#890 and 892) to provincial highway status in order to pave them, thereby reducing future maintenance costs to the M.D. There have also been discussions with the province regarding the sharing of industrial tax money which is generated by the oil industry and paid to the Improvement District.

7.2 Philosophy

The Council believes that the provision and maintenance of a good road system in the M.D. is one of its primary responsibilities. It also feels that the impact of transportation routes and utility lines should be minimized so as to protect existing development and land uses.

7.3 Policies

1. Priorities for road improvements and road building shall be identified on an annual basis.

2. Lands for road widening of existing rights-of-way or the establishment of new routes shall be obtained at the time of subdivision approval, in order to facilitate road improvements as they are required.

3. Where alternative routes are available, heavy vehicles and heavy traffic volumes related to resource extraction operations shall be requested to utilize roads which can accommodate heavy usage, and to avoid routes utilized by farm vehicles, school buses and recreational vehicles.

4. To conserve land, reduce fragmentation and minimize land use conflicts, the M.D. shall encourage

   i) utilization of existing rights-of-way for infrastructure lines (gas, power etc).

   ii) siting of new rights-of-way along quarter section lines or major physical features.

8. HISTORIC RESOURCES

8.1 Background

Various groups of people have settled in the M.D. throughout the years, and a significant number of historic sites and artifacts could remain, although few have as yet been identified. These non-renewable resources, which are often located along rivers or lakeshores, can provide valuable educational opportunities and cultural reminders for present and future residents if they are not inadvertently destroyed or over-looked. The Province endeavors to protect these resources by requiring that a Historic Resource Impact Assessment be conducted prior to any major development, such as multi-lot subdivisions, occurring.

8.2 Philosophy

The Council recognizes the cultural value of historic resources and wishes to ensure their protection, in order that they may be enjoyed by local residents as well as tourists. The Council will cooperate with agencies or private groups in the discovery and conservation of such resources.

8.3 Policies

1. Alberta Culture shall be requested to provide an inventory of all known historical resources in the M.D.

2. A building or site may be designated as a Municipal Historic Resource if the costs associated with the designation are reasonable and preservation of the resource is for the public good.

3. The utilization of historical resources shall be encouraged in order to promote tourism in the M.D.

PART THREE – ADMINISTRATION

1. IMPLEMENTATION

This Plan comes into effect on the date that it receives third and final reading. The Council shall ensure that the land use bylaw and all adopted area structure plans are in conformance with the goals and policies of this Plan.

2. AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

Section 139(a) of the Planning Act, R.S.A. 1980, outlines the procedure for an amendment to the General Municipal Plan. When reviewing proposals for amendment, the M.D. shall ensure that the change is in agreement with the Plan Goals. A request for an amendment shall be made in writing, and shall address the reasons for the amendment and conformity with the Plan's intent. When reviewing an amendment, the M.D. shall consult with any agencies it feels may be of assistance.

3. REVIEW AND MONITORING

Planning is a continuous process and it is important that the General Municipal Plan be monitored, reviewed and updated in order to ensure that the planning needs of the M.D. are being met. A review may be appropriate when:

a) changes in economic, social or technical developments occur,

b) a new Council is elected, or

c) an amendment to the Plan is maae.

A major review shall be undertaken at least once over every three year period. In addition an annual report may be prepared highlighting any changes which have occurred in the M.D. and how these relate to the Plan's effectiveness.

4. DEFINITIONS

The terms used in this Plan shall have the same meaning as those defined in the Municipal District of Bonnyville No. 87 Land Use Bylaw as amended. In addition, the following terms have been used in this Plan:

"May" means a choice is available and no particular direction or guidance is intended;
"Shall" means the action is obligatory.